

# freshii



## COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

### Canadian expansion: New Franchisee Outreach

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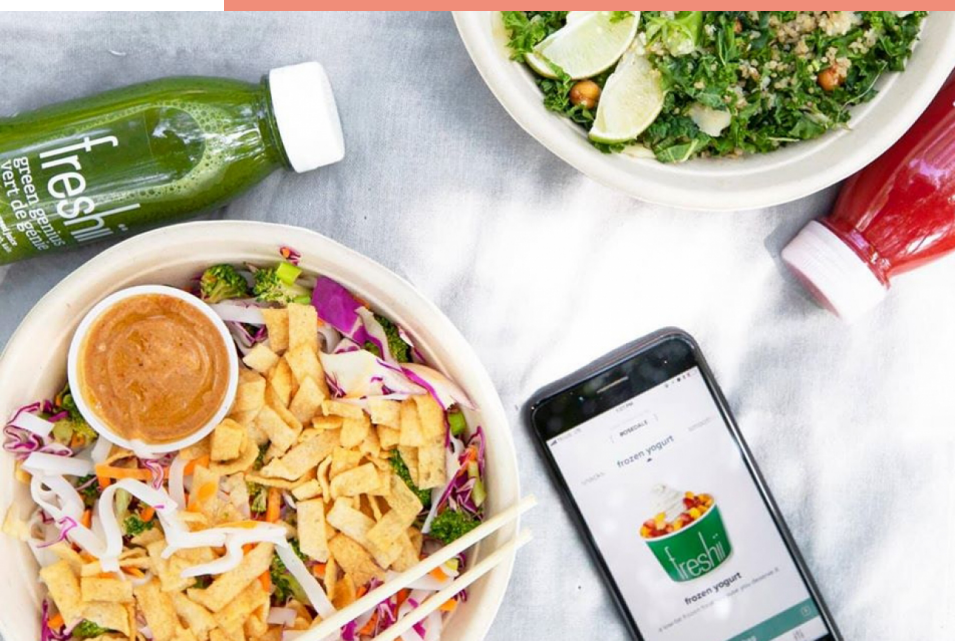


# INTRODUCTION AND OPPORTUNITY

**F**reshii is a Toronto-based company that sells healthy fast foods. The company was created in 2005 by Matthew Corrin with a mission to make healthy food accessible and economical. After opening the first location, the organization opened the other 100 faster than McDonald's or Starbucks. By 2019, it grew to over 350 locations in 15 countries. Freshii began trading on Toronto Stock Exchange on January 31, 2017. Today, the company trades around \$1.9 CAD with a market cap of \$51.33M CAD.

On November 9th, 2021, Freshii announced a plan to expand its operations in Canada by 50 percent by 2025. The organization is looking to open approximately 270 new locations by attracting new franchisees as well as working with existing ones.

This presents an opportunity for PR because a strategy is required to communicate this news to various stakeholders.



# SWOT Analysis

## Strengths

- Fast growing company that expanded locally and internationally to 350 locations (North America, Europe, and South America).
- Customizable menu lets the customers select what they like.
- CEO, Matthew Corrin, is also a founder.
- Unique and recognizable brand, positive image.
- Was awarded Best Workplace Culture at the Canadian HR awards.
- Store locations do not have expensive and risky kitchen equipment such as fryers, vents, grills, etc.
- Flat organizational structure.



## Weaknesses

- Criticized by the public for their take-out container containing toxic chemicals
- Cash shortages, slow post pandemic recovery
- Decreased share price
- No culture specific options on the menu, such as halal meats.
- Poor contingency planning in case of emergency (pandemic).
- Weak social media following (Instagram 110K, Twitter 15k, Facebook 43k).
- The company's financial trouble can deter potential franchisees from pursuing Freshii as a business, thus preventing the organization from achieving its targeted growth goals.

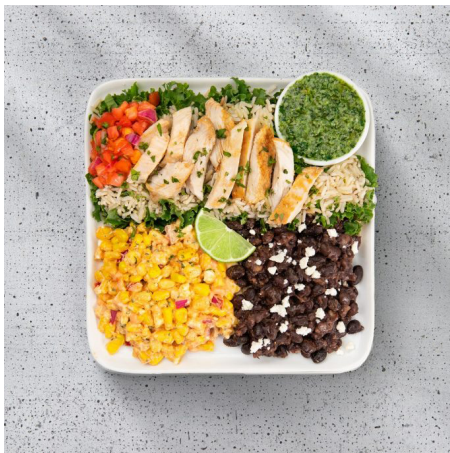




# SWOT Analysis

## Opportunities

- Recovery from pandemic is an opportunity to expand to suburban locations as those are recovering faster than downtown locations
- Increased immigration and general population growth is creating a larger target market
- Developing culture of a healthier lifestyle and growing customer awareness about healthier food alternatives
- Various diets to tend to keto, paleo, vegan, gluten-free, etc.
- Ability to raise brand awareness via social media
- Potential partnerships with grocery stores to sell various pre-packaged meal boxes.
- An opportunity to develop a Freshii app for mobile devices
- to make take-out ordering easier and faster.



## Threats

- Recession can decrease people's disposable income which can decrease Freshii's sales.
- Potential increase in interest rates can make it expensive for Freshii's franchisees to finance their investments by borrowing.
- Increases in minimum wages will make it more expensive for Freshii stores to operate.
- Pandemic and COVID lockdowns may make people cook at home.
- Increases in costs of raw materials
- Increases in real estate prices
- Global supply chain delays and issues
- Competitors such as Chipotle, Protein Bar, Subway and Panera Bread can easily adjust their menu to compete with Freshii.

# Audiences

## External

- Consumers
- Potential franchisees
- Future investors
- Key Opinion Leaders in the food industry. For example, Larry Oberkfell, CEO of International Foodservice Manufacturers Association.
- Health foods social media influencers
- Government (Health Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency)
- Raw materials suppliers
- Landlords



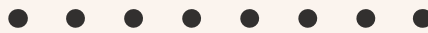
## Internal

- Existing franchisees
- Freshii head office employees and stores employees.
- Shareholders and business partners



# Primary Audience

Because the expansion is still in the early planning stages, I selected ***potential franchisees*** as a primary target audience for this assignment. There is an opportunity to shape the opinion about the company to fulfill the need to attract high-quality candidates.



- Male and female Millennials and Generation Xs aged 35 to 55 who want to be their own bosses
- Can afford to purchase a franchise
- University educated in the financial sector
- Possibly already own a franchise
- Hard-working and passionate about healthy food
- Experienced and knowledgeable in store operations
- Active in restaurant and hospitality community





# Empathy Map

<p><b><i>Say and Do</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read business publications</li> <li>• Follow business celebrities such as Mark Cuban</li> <li>• Network with other business owners</li> <li>• Take pride in their businesses</li> <li>• Eat a healthy diet, promote healthy living</li> <li>• Exercise on regular basis</li> <li>• Get involved with local communities</li> <li>• Compare Freshii to other franchise opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Think and Feel</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear that the investment might not pay off</li> <li>• Worry about not being able to pay the bills</li> <li>• Thinking about the risks</li> <li>• Like the confidence of Freshii's CEO</li> <li>• Like being a part of a (Freshii) community</li> <li>• Want to pursue their passions</li> <li>• Like that the Freshii foods are prepared on site using local healthy ingredients</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Hear</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freshii's downtown locations are not doing very well financially because many workers have not returned to the offices.</li> <li>• Freshii recorded financial losses during pandemic and the recovery has been slow</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>See</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural shift towards healthier foods</li> <li>• Freshii's just <u>signed</u> a large franchise deal with a hospitality operator in Texas</li> <li>• Freshii is fast growing</li> <li>• Freshii is <u>surpassed</u> by Tim Hortons and Booster Juice on the list of top franchises to invest into in Canada.</li> <li>• More people work from home during pandemic, more people become interested in healthy cooking kids such as <u>Chef's Plate</u>, instead of takeouts.</li> <li>• Unstable Economy</li> <li>• Covid 19 pandemic that won't go away</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Pains</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding investment capital</li> <li>• Not being able to support family</li> <li>• High royalty payments. What if they increase?</li> <li>• If I open a franchise, I will have no flexibility to create rules or modify the business.</li> <li>• If Freshii reputation suffers, my business suffers</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Gains</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With a Freshii, I won't need to build up the brand from scratch and I will get training and manuals on how to run it.</li> <li>• Can build a profitable business and feel pride and accomplishment</li> <li>• Profits</li> </ul>

# PR Goals and Objectives

Freshii needs to increase brand awareness amongst potential franchisees. **Recruitment** is an overarching PR goal.



**Objective 1:** Obtain 1,000 quality franchise applications from the target audience by December, 2024.



**Objective 2:** Increase Freshii Franchising website traffic (visits/month) by 50% by January, 2023.



**Objective 3:** Increase the LinkedIn following from 24,000 to 50,000 by December 2022.

## ***Earned***

Sign up for speaking engagements with top five business events and five MBA University programs (MBA programs admit experienced students with great business acumen).

***Tactic 1:*** In the speech, I recommend addressing recent financial setbacks and explaining how Freshii is recovering. I suggest being clear about the company's expansion and outlining what makes it a good investment opportunity. Freshii should provide/offer printed material about owning the Freshii franchise to the attendees. The printed material should include a sales pitch stating what sets Freshii apart from the competitors, the benefits of owning a Freshii franchise, and a business card of the guest speaker. The speaker should encourage the attendees to reach out personally for further information.

***Tactic 2:*** During the speaking engagement I recommend sharing the success stories of those who became Freshii franchises. I suggest selecting the stories which talk about a hardship that the franchisee encountered but overcame with Freshii's help. I suggest for the speaker to urge the potential franchises to come and meet those franchisees by signing up for a tour of their facilities.

***Key Message:*** Freshii is recovering well after the financial troubles which makes it a great choice for a franchise investment.





## ***Owned/Shared***

Create a Freshii blog that will provide potential franchisees with information about Freshii's culture and business and link the Freshii franchise information pages.

***Tactic 1:*** Publish articles that describe the successes of those who own Freshii franchise. Include powerful imagery similar to "[Humans of NY.](#)" Share the articles on business forums.

***Tactic 2:*** Contact business blogs and write guest posts for them. Write helpful business tips about owning a franchise. While at it, highlight a great franchisee development program that Freshii offers.

***Key Message:*** The people who partner with us are just like you and they succeed with Freshii's amazing advice and support.

## ***Shared/Paid***

Generate LinkedIn likes and shares of Freshii content among food and hospitality business communities by posting engaging and relevant content.

***Tactic 1:*** Encourage existing franchisees (brand advocates) to share Freshii's blog articles to LinkedIn. Also, share the content to Freshii LinkedIn in profile. Increase the value that the entrepreneurs derive from following Freshii by offering savvy business advice and education. Ask people to follow Freshii.

***Tactic 2:*** Involve(Pay) LinkedIn franchise influencers (names below) to share Freshii content and advocate for the brand.

[Lisa Welko](#)

[Nick Powills](#)

[David Barr](#)

***Key Message:*** Freshii is here to support its franchise partners and to offer open communication and assistance.

# Spokespeople



## ***Freshii CEO Matthew Corrin***

Matthew Corrin is the original founder of Freshii who led the company for the last 16 years. As a successful entrepreneur, he overcame many business setbacks. His reputation is tied to Freshii brand which makes him personally invested in the company's success. His passion and his story inspire many. He won awards such as the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award and Canada's Top 40 under 40. He would be a great spokesperson because our primary audience admires him.

## ***Freshii CFO Daniel Haroun***

Daniel Haroun joined the freshii team in 2019. Unlike Matthew Corrin, Daniel Haroun has experience running businesses other than Freshii (such as Tim Hortons) which gives him a fresh perspective of the company. Daniel Haroun is relatable to entrepreneurs as he started working in the retail family business (pharmacy) very young. He is a great spokesperson because he holds CPA and CA designations which makes him credible among investors who are also potential freshii franchisees. He has the knowledge and experience to advocate for freshii's success.



# Evaluations

**Objective 1:** Obtain 1000 quality franchise applications from the target audience by December 2024.

**Benchmark:** Track the applications received against the target demographic identified above to determine whether the number of quality submissions meets or exceeds the above-identified goal.

- Measure the attendance during the speaking engagements
- Measure the number of printed material packages handed out
- Measure the number of individuals who reached out for a tour of the existing franchise locations
- Compare the numbers to the number of applications submitted to see if our campaign is working

**Objective 2:** Increase Freshii Franchising website traffic (visits/month) by 50% by January 2023.

**Benchmark:** Use Google Analytics to track website traffic to see how many monthly visits it has. Also, track how long the people stay on the website, where they click, and how many of them proceed to the application form and submit it. It also will be helpful to know how many proceed to the application form, but abandon it.

- Measure the number of visits to the blog, how long did the people stay, what was the average blog post reading time.
- Measure the number and quality of blog post comments to see our target demographic's attitude towards our efforts
- Measure the number of shares by visitors to see whether the content is popular

**Objective 3:** Increase the LinkedIn following from 24,000 to 50,000 by December 2022.

**Benchmark:** Measure the number of individuals who follow Freshii LinkedIn page.

- Measure likes and shares for LinkedIn content posted by Freshii
- Measure likes, shares and comments that the content posted by the influencers gets.



# Questions

- Which one was the most effective strategy?
- Did our strategies improve the number of franchise applications?
- Did our campaign improve the quality of our franchisee applicants?
- Were our speakers effective in convincing our primary audience that freshii is recovering well financially after the pandemic?
- How do our potential franchisees feel about Freshii?
- Did we increase the number of our LinkedIn followers?

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